

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

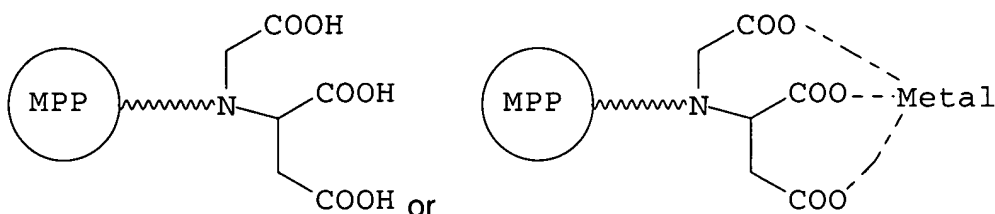
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A conjugate comprising a magnetic polymer particle bound to a carboxymethylated aspartate chelating ligand.
2. (Original) A conjugate comprising a magnetic polymer particle bound to a carboxymethylated aspartate ligand chelating a metal atom or ion.
3. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 2 wherein said metal is a transition metal or a metal of group 13.
4. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 3 wherein said metal is Ni, Fe, Ga, Mn, Co, Cu and Zn.
5. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 4 wherein said metal is Fe, Ga, Mn and Co.
6. (Currently Amended) A conjugate as claimed in claim 2 to 5 wherein said metal is in the 2+ or 3+ oxidation state.
7. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 6 wherein said metal is Co^{2+} , Fe^{3+} , Ga^{3+} and Cu^{2+} .

8. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 7 wherein said metal is Co^{2+} .

9. (Currently Amended) A conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 to 8 wherein there are at least three atoms between the nitrogen atom of the carboxymethylated aspartate ligand and the particle surface.

10. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 9 being of formula



(MPP=magnetic polymer particle)

wherein the wavy line represents a 3 to 20 atom linker selected from NH-alkylene, NH-CO-alkylene, O-alkylene, OCO-alkylene, S-alkylene or SCO-alkylene.

11. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 10 wherein the wavy line represents $\text{NH-C}_5\text{H}_{12}-$ or $\text{NH-C}_6\text{H}_{13}-$.

12. (Currently Amended) A conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 to 11 wherein said polymer comprises a cross-linked styrene divinyl benzene polymer.

13. (Currently Amended) A conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~claim 1 to 12 wherein the magnetic polymer particle has a diameter of 0.5 to 8 μm .

14. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 12 wherein said magnetic polymer particle has a diameter of 0.8 to 1.2 μm .

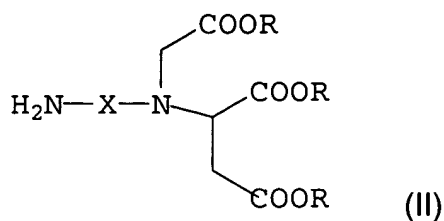
15. (Currently Amended) A conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~claim 1 to 14 being uncharged.

16. (Currently Amended) A conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~claim 2 to 15 additionally chelated to a histidine tagged recombinant protein/peptide, His, Cys, Met, Gln, Asn, Lys and/or Tyr residue containing native protein/peptide or phosphorylated protein/peptide.

17. (Currently Amended) A conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of claims~~claim 2 to 16 additionally chelated to a histidine tagged recombinant protein/peptide.

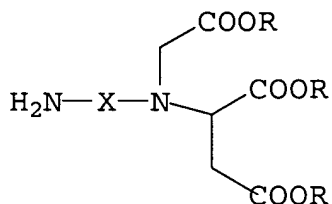
18. (Original) A conjugate as claimed in claim 16 characterised in that where said conjugate binds a phosphorylated protein/peptide, said metal is Fe or Ga.

19. (Original) A process for the preparation of a conjugate comprising a magnetic polymer particle bound to a Cm-Asp ligand comprising reacting a Cm-Asp ligand of formula (II)



(wherein each R independently represents hydrogen or a protecting group and X represents a 2 to 20 atom group) with a magnetic polymer particle, and optionally coordinating the resulting conjugate to a metal atom or ion.

20. (Original) A compound of formula (II)

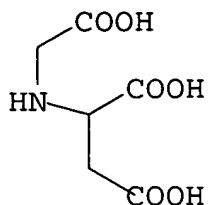


(wherein each R independently represents hydrogen or a protecting group and X represents a 2 to 20 atom group) or an analogue therefore in which the R groups are absent and a metal chelated.

21. (Original) A compound as claimed in claim 20 wherein X is a C5 or C6-alkylene group.

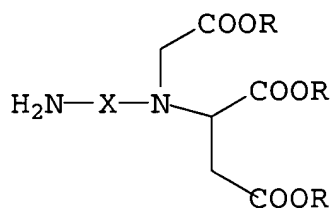
22. (Original) A compound of formula (III) or an analogue thereof in which a metal is

chelated



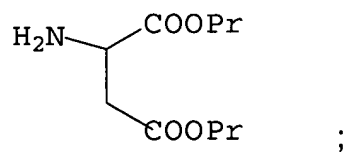
(III)

23. (Original) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula



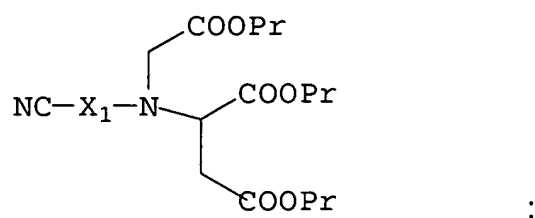
(wherein each R independently represents hydrogen or a protecting group and X represents an C₂₋₂₀ alkylene linker);

comprising reacting a compound of formula Hal-X₁-CN (wherein Hal is a halide and X₁ represents an C₁₋₁₉ alkylene linker) with a compound of formula



(wherein Pr is a protecting group)

reacting the resulting product with a compound of formula Hal-CH₂COOPr to form a compound



reducing the nitrile to an amino group; and optionally deprotecting the carboxyl groups.

~~[[25]]~~24. (Currently Amended) Use of a conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of~~
~~claims~~claim 2 to 18 in an assay.

~~[[26]]~~25. (Currently Amended) Use of a conjugate as claimed in ~~any one of~~
~~claims~~claim 2 to 18 in the purification of histidine tagged recombinant proteins/peptides,
His, Cys, Met, Gln, Asn, Lys and/or Tyr residue containing native proteins/peptides or
phosphorylated proteins/peptides.